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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT: TURIN 2006 WINTER OLYMPICS: USG SITUATION REPORT
(SITREP) #21, 02/27/2006

REF: ROME 587

1. (U) This is the final sitrep from the USG office supporting U.S. participation in the Turin Winter Olympics. The Closing Ceremonies of the 2006 Winter Olympic Games concluded on a high note on 02/26/2006, as IOC officials hailed the 17-day Olympic Games as a major success. Italian security efforts for the Games were widely praised by the media and by U.S. VIP Rudolph Giuliani, who touted the host organization for the Turin Olympics as a model of success for future Games. Press coverage related to the U.S. was extremely positive, including the lack of attention paid to the USG security presence, allowing the media to focus positively on Turin, Italian law enforcement efforts, and the sporting competitions. U.S. VIP presence at the Opening Ceremonies - the First Lady's visit to University of Turin and other Olympics activities - received widespread positive coverage. The Presidential Delegation to the Closing Ceremonies, led by former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, rounded out the positive coverage of U.S. presence at the Games, including Giuliani's oft-repeated praise for Italian security organization.

2. (SBU) USG interagency security preparation and liaison with Italian authorities was exemplary. We extend deep appreciation to all the USG agencies who provided such a wealth of talent and experience to this model organization in Turin. The inter-agency and interfunctional collaboration fulfilled its mission of supporting American participation at the Olympics for a safe and secure experience.

3. (U) With the conclusion of the Winter Olympics, USG mission turns to supporting U.S. participation in the Paralympics, including an expected VIP delegation. OSOC continues liaison with Italian and TOROC authorities, and will reorganize security preparations for the upcoming Paralympic Games, to be held in Turin from 03/09/2006-03/19/2006. OSOC is working with Italian counterparts to ensure the safety and security of U.S. Paralympic athletes, sponsors, and spectators. CA will resume public outreach efforts with local Turin tourist and emergency services, to publicize the fact that Consular Services will be available to American citizens during the Paralympics. (Note contact information below)

4. (U) Sitreps will resume with the commencement of the 2006 Paralympic Games, which begin on 03/09/2006.

SECURITY

Terrorist Activity/Threats:

5. (SBU) The Winter Olympics concluded with no evidence that terrorist organizations targeted the Games. Italian security forces were assertive in detecting and deterring threatening activity in Turin and elsewhere in Italy. Italian officials remain vigilant on security issues and threats. The number of Italian law enforcement officers in Turin will be decreased for the Paralympics; the scope of the events and number of participants is greatly reduced compared to the Olympics. There is no indication of a specific, credible threat to the Paralympics. OSOC will coordinate with Italian counterparts in the upcoming month to identify potential security issues related to the Paralympic Games.

Demonstrations/Protests:

6. (U) During the 02/26/2006 Closing Ceremonies, two individuals attempted to disrupt the event. One incident involved a streaker and the other involved an approach to the speaker's podium. Security forces prevented the individuals from disrupting the festivities and quickly restored order. Italian authorities are currently investigating lessons learned on these access control violations.

7. (U) The incidence of activist protests in Turin significantly decreased during the Olympic Games. The

"Olympic truce" between protesters and law enforcement officials expires on 02/27/2006, which could result in a resumption of "No TAV," environmental, and anti-global demonstration activity in Turin and the surrounding areas. OSOC is not aware of any protests scheduled to occur during the Paralympics. OSOC and Italian counterparts remain attentive to such plans since, as with the Winter Games, activist groups may view the increased media presence in Turin for the Paralympics as an opportunity to promote their causes.

Incidents:

18. (SBU) On 02/25/2006, USOC informed OSOC that a U.S. female athlete had a beer thrown in her face while at a bar. Later in the evening, the athlete's dormitory room was kicked in; she was not in her room at the time. Italian law enforcement officers continue to investigate the incident. CA coordinated with OSOC and USOC on consular follow-up.

19. (SBU) In the early hours of 02/27/2006, OSOC received a report of an altercation at a Turin caf. The caller, a Massachusetts State Trooper, advised that an English-speaking individual had been stabbed and that caf patrons--including American citizens (Amcits)--were being held in the caf by Italian hooligans. Italian police and OSOC personnel responded to the scene. The wounded individual was determined to be a UK citizen and was transported to the hospital. OSOC personnel confirmed that there were no Amcit casualties or involvement in the altercation.

SECURITY OPERATIONS

10. (U) With the successful closing of the Olympic Games, OSOC has turned its attention to providing security assistance for the Paralympic Games. OSOC will continue to conduct liaison with Italian authorities in order to identify activity that could disrupt the Paralympics or endanger U.S. athletes, sponsors, or spectators. The JOC and TIC are no longer operating 24/7 as of 27 February 2006. Sitreps will resume for Paralympics.

VIPs

11. (SBU) The White House Delegation, lead by former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, attended the Closing Ceremonies on 02/26/2006. Earlier in the day, the delegation participated in a press-availability meeting at the Piedmont Media Center, followed by a meet-and-greet for USG personnel. The delegation departed Turin without incident immediately following the Closing Ceremonies.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS/PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

12. (U) On 02/27/2006, the vast majority of Italian Olympics-related media coverage focused on the successful Closing Ceremonies. Attention was paid to the carnival theme of the festivities, as well as to IOC President Jacques Rogge's positive comments on security and organization. Coverage of the final Olympic sporting events centered on the Swedish hockey victory and the Italian gold medal win in the 50km Cross-Country. There was little coverage of security stories, though most dailies noted the praise for organization and compliments paid to the Italian security forces by Rudolph Giuliani.

13. (U) PA successfully closed out its media programming for the White House Delegation on 02/26/2006. Interviews with head of delegation Rudolph Giuliani and other members of the delegation were conducted by very wide variety of Italian media, and U.S. news media. Sports reporters focused on Mario Andretti; all delegation members were interviewed at least once. A half-hour press panel conference was followed by one-on-one interviews for a two-hour program at the Turin Piedmont Media Center. Delegation members expressed satisfaction with their visit.

14. (U) With the conclusion of the Winter Olympics, PA continues press outreach efforts for the Paralympic Games. On 02/27/2006, La Stampa carried a positive, PA-facilitated interview with U.S. Paralympians Ralph Green and Laurie Stephens. PA also placed them on the NBC Today Show on 02/24/2006. PA continues to negotiate with U.S. speedskater Joey Cheek to participate in an Olympics speaker program.

15. (U) The Public Affairs Office in Turin may be reached at 39-011-55-99-368.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

¶16. (U) CA received five requests for service from Amcits on 02/26/2006. All requests involved lost or stolen passports. One passport reported stolen was later recovered by the owner in a mountain venue. The Consular Office in Turin requested that consular staff in Milan provide an emergency replacement passport for an Amcit whose belongings were stolen on 2/25/2006 and who had to depart for the U.S. on 2/27/2006.

¶17. (U) CA continues to work on the 02/24/2006 death of an American citizen. The body was embalmed at the U.S. Army Base in Vicenza and returned to Turin; the funeral home is working on an itinerary so that the family may accompany the remains to the U.S. The Consular Office completed the Consular Report of Death and delivered it and accompanying paperwork to the next of kin in Turin.

¶18. (U) The Consular Office will remain active during the upcoming Paralympic Games. As with the Winter Olympics, CA will conduct outreach efforts with local hospitals, law enforcement, and emergency services to publicize the fact that consular services will be available to Amcits during the Paralympics. The consular phone number will continue to be accessible during the month of March, though calls will be transferred to Milan in the interim between the end of the Winter Olympics and the beginning of the Paralympics.

¶19. (U) The Consular Office will continue to be available at the following number: 011-5599-330 (tel.). Additional information may be found at <http://milan.usconsulate.gov>.
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